

THE
Church Defended,
AGAINST
Mr. SKINGLE's
Affize-Sermon
AT
HERTFORD.

IN A
LETTER to a FRIEND.

By a True Lover of the Orthodox Clergie.

L O N D O N,
Printed in the YEAR MDCXCIX.

1870

1871

1872

S I R,

YOU expect my Sentiments of this Sermon, and the Author. I have fairly consider'd the Subject, Style, Arguments, and Design; have amended all the Printer's *Errata*, (that the Discourse might appear with the best Advantage:) But found many more and worse of his own, that require Correction. To deal in reality with my Friend, and all Mankind, I must say, it has very little or nothing of any Value, except its Brevity: And this, one would think, but a slender Reason to recommend it to the long-winded and long-ear'd *Presbyterians*; the only Persons (I'm told) that give any tolerable Allowance of it. The *Judges*, and other Learned Men, saw no more Cause to thank him, than I do: And the *Dissenters*, who came to listen at the Doors and Windows, tho' extremely pleas'd with this Jingling Piece of *Vulgar Oratory*, are herein represented as Men of the smallest Reason and Judgment in the World, by making and continuing a *Separation* from the *Church*, upon no material or substantial *Ground*; only for some fanciful, extraordinary, scrupulous **NOTHING**. I have no Acquaintance with the Author, and therefore do not pretend to give a *Character* of him: But if we may believe some serious Persons, he deserves no very honourable Esteem; tho' 'tis to be hoped, that he doth not *live* so loosely as he *writes*. But, perhaps the *Saints* may think his *Sermon* a sufficient Proof, that he hath a *Conscience void of Offence both towards God and towards Man*, since he inveighs so zealously against the Vices of the Age: Yet for my part, I

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(who differ from them in much more weighty Matters) cannot agree with them in this. For, altho' heretofore an *Exemplary Conversation*, and a *close way of Arguing*, were look'd on as *necessary Qualifications* in a Reformer; yet now-a-days no body is so forward to take that Office upon him, as he that wants *Both*. And that our Author is guilty, at the least, of the *latter* of these, I think will be obvious to every one that peruseth his Sermon with but a little more Care than it deserves.

And that this may not seem any great *Wonderment* to the impartial Reader, I shall desire him to take notice of,
 1. The *Impropriety* of the *Subject*. 2. His *Illogical Proceeding*. And, 3. The *Impertinence* and *Insufficiency* of his *Arguments*.

The Text,

Psal. 126. 3. *The Lord hath done great Things for us.*

The Title is,

REFORMATION and UNION.

Another Preacher would have chosen a more suitable *Text* for an *Affize-Sermon*; or, at least, would have made the *Body* of the *Discourse* to agree with the *Sense* of his *present Subject*. I don't deny *Reformation* and *Union* to be very great and necessary Blessings; (none more desirous of them, none do more heartily endeavour after 'em, than true *Church-men*;) But he was a cunning Man, to spy *Reformation* and *Union* in this *Text*. I expected to have read *God's Mercy* and the *Churches Duty* judiciously recommended; and then, not directly, but by Inference or Application, our *Gratitude* to our most admirable *Benefactor*, our *Respect* and *Obedience* to the *Laws* of *God* and his *Church*, might more fitly be enforc'd from the Words of the *Psalmist*, than *Reformation* and *Union*.

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He begins with a *Grecian* Deliverance; tells not *How*, nor *What*; but applies it to the *Presbyterian Liberty*. A Wonderment indeed! That this magnified *Liberty*, without *Restriction* or *Limitation*, (a *Liberty* that opens a Door to all *Error*, *Herésie*, and *Schism*; to all *Irreligion*, *Immorality*, and *Profaneness*; to all the *Mischiefs* and *Disorders* in *Church* and *State*) should be look'd upon as so vast a Blessing in any *Christian Government*, or as a proper Means to preserve *Religion in the Life and Power of it*! [*Vid. Epist. Dedic.*] This unbounded *Liberty* (after all that can be said in its Defence) is not a more justifiable Project to this purpose, than 'twould be to talk of securing a *Vineyard* by pulling down the *Fence*, laying it wide open to the Mercy of *Boars* and *Foxes*; presuming that this *Liberty* would *civilize* and *soften* their wild and savage Natures, render 'em so *just* and *inoffensive*, as not to root up or tear down the *Vines*; merely, because these brutish Creatures were left to their own *Liberty*. Our Author was not aware of this Absurdity, or conceal'd all Apprehensions of Danger, from our present Circumstances: But in a *Page* or two, designing to make sweet Musick in the *Dissenters* Ears, boldly touches again upon the same String, and joins himself in Consort with them, pag. 1, 3. Their *Sufferings* were remembred, but not the *Cause* for which they suffer'd, nor that of his own *Suspension*.

After the *Grecians*, he bethinks himself of the *Jews*, (to whom by his Text he ow'd a peculiar Reference) gives this Account of them, as of the former, *That they were like Men in a Dream*. Doubtless, the Preacher was so, when he deliver'd this *Sermon*; and not well awake when he printed it. Pag. 2.

In the same *Page* we have his wise Observation, viz. *That God is pleas'd to work in a very eminent manner for the*

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the Welfare of his People: And when he doth so, it's their Duty to take notice of it. I would not here be mistaken, as if I blam'd him for asserting so evident Truths: That which I esteem him culpable for, is the making of that to be but *One Observation*, which is so plainly *Two*. But perhaps this must pass for a very excusable Mistake, being easily betray'd into it by his Love of *Union*.

At *Pag. 3.* he tells us, *That all the Desires and Attempts, by just and due Methods, to make us happy, were frustrated; and the Strugglings of Honest Men were but like those of Slaves, which ended in a more cruel Bondage.* This I must own to be a sad Truth: But, as I take it, the Persons that chiefly, if not solely, stood in the Gap, were *Church-men*. *Fanatics* were favour'd with *Smiles* and *Commissions*, when the *Members* of the *University* were thrown out of their *lawful Possessions*: And at the same time that the *Bishops* were committed to the *Tower*, many *Sectaries* were receiv'd in the *Closet*, and into the *Bosom*: So that what immediately follows, I shall assent to, tho' possibly with a different Aim and Meaning from him, *viz.* *That tho' we had then to do with those who went under the Name of Protestants, yet were our Lives and Liberties in the Hands of Violence and Oppression.* I disown not our late *Dangers of Popery and Slavery*; nor would I undervalue the *Mercy of a Deliverance*: Yet if the *Nation* must be ruin'd or enslav'd, why not by *Popery*, as well as *Presbytery*? If we are to suffer in *Life or Estate*, it matters not what *Religion* our *Executioners* profess. If a *Ship* be in danger of *Sinking*, this *Scylla*, or that *Charybdis*, are equally Fatal, and equally to be avoided, by steering in the Middle and Safe Way of the *Church of England*.

At *Pag. 4.* he presents us with a mighty *Harangue* in Praise of the *KING*; but perhaps not with over-much
Sincerity:

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Sincerity: For, that *Party* which he favours, and hopes to be favour'd by, have an *Invincible Prejudice* to *Crown'd Heads*, and will always follow the Bent of their own Inclinations, which will not suffer them to shew any real Kindness to *Monarchy*; and therefore, notwithstanding their fulsom Flattery, *They are not presently to be trusted*, for fear the *Sting* should still be in them, and *Safety and Opportunity* might Encourage them to thrust it out.

Pag. 5. None more likely to have that unworthy Carriage of the *Refresh'd Traveller*, than *Presbyterians*; who kneel to the *King* as the *Fountain of Refreshment*, yet may soon turn their Backs, when they don't need him. What Sort of Men so *Fickle*, or so *Inconstant*? Or where can we find a more *Ungrateful* People? All the *Kindnesses*, all the *merciful Concessions* shew'd them in former Reigns, were interpreted as Arguments of *Weakness* or *Cowardice* in the *Prince*; and the Consequence of *That*, is too well known, to need a Remembrance. Only this one Thing I would not omit, being perhaps a Secret to most Men: That after the horrible Murder of King CHARLES the First, when all his Friends were utterly disabl'd from making any *Opposition*, (that there might be a *sure Work of Reformation in the Land*) 'twas Voted in Parliament, to put all the *King's Friends* to Death in Cold Blood; and it was carried in the Negative only by Two. Those of the *Loyal Party* who surviv'd that Danger, lost their *Estates* and *Liberties*; and 'twas a Wonderment they scap'd so. If the Reader would know the *Presbyterian-Temper* at this Day, let him look into *Scotland*: Lay but the *Old Covenant*, or *Common-wealth-Mouse* before this transform'd Puss of *Presbytery*, she cannot but return to her own *Nature*, and leap at the Bait.

N. B.

At Pag. 5. that he might shew his *Reading*, he quotes Mr. Charnock, for what he might have learn'd out of *Scripture*, in several Places, viz. *That the Israelites had a Regret that they were brought out of Egypt*: Which puts me in mind of that Story of the *Sorbonist*, who being asked, Where he read such a Thing in the *New Testament*? answered, That he had read it in St. Jerome, or in the *Decrees*; but, for the *New Testament*, he knew not what it was.

I am not fond of exposing all the Misapplications of this *Man of Uses*; nor of finding Fault with any Thing, wherein the *Truth* was not in danger to be mistaken. 'Tis strange Ill-Fortune, if a Man shoots many *Arrows*, not to come near the *Mark* with *One* or *Two*; and the Author would be vex'd to have his whole *Sermon* prov'd a *Presbyterian Cant*: Yet let the *Reader* consider, that *Truths*, as well as *Lies*, may be *spoken in hypocrisie*, 1 *Tim.* 4. 2.

At length he comes to his

REFORMATION and UNION, p. 8, 9, 10, 11.

To the First, I answer, That if our *Church* needs purging from her *Dregs*, with all our Hearts, we desire it should be so: But then, I doubt, (without gentle *Physick*) Mr. S. will not long continue in our *Communion*, but must sink down to the *Common-shore*, amongst the worst *Presbyterians*: Does he, or any Man believe, that the *Dissenters* have no Cause to purge out *their Dregs* too? I'm sure their *Lives* and *Principles* require it; 'tis as much wanting among the *Presbyterians*, *Independents*, and all other *Sectaries*, and more by far, than in the *Church*. This *Universal Reformation* we daily pray for; and it would be sooner done, all *Immoralities* and *Prophaneness* would cease to a great Degree, were not the
proper

proper Means of Reformation so strenuously oppos'd by our *open* and *secret Enemies*. These are chiefly in the Fault; We must expect to be more and more vitiated and deform'd, in our *Manners*, to see the *Nation* expos'd to all *Mischiefs*; unless we can fantasie this to be the *Golden Age*, wherein Men will be *Good* and *Vertuous* of *themselves*, without the Force of *Law* and *Justice* to govern them. So *desirable a Blessing*, I am certain, cannot belong to this *evil, crooked, and perverse Generation*.

'Tis not to be doubted, but there is too much *Swearing* practis'd in the Land: But whether the *Unjustifiableness* of the Sin, or our *Act of Parliament* against it, hath occasion'd a Reformation in this Particular, I know not; but am willing to believe, That our *Gentry* are less guilty of it than formerly, and that it is now sunk to the *Bottom* of the *People*; with whom, perhaps, this Gentleman mostly converseth; and therefore judgeth of the *Age*, by the *Company* that he himself keeps. But supposing that it reigned as much as ever, yet I don't like his *Expedient* for suppressing it; which is, *That Parish-Officers should be most strictly requir'd to take notice of it*. If he means, in stead of that Method which the *Parliament* has prescrib'd, (wherein the *Accuser* is so much encouraged, and the *Magistrate* so much threatned, if he be remiss) then, I think, our Change would be much for the Worse: But, if he means it as an *additional Help* to the *Statute*, I fancy, the *Parliament* will scarce think it worth their while to follow his Advice, and make a *New Act*, rather than lose his *Expedient*; when every one that will, may put his helping Hand to the Suppressing of the *Vice*; which may be somewhat more useful, than an *Injunction* upon *Parish-Officers* is like to be.

In the same *Paragraph* he commends a very few Gentlemen of that *County*, for their *Zeal* in this Matter; and at the same Breath, casts a *Disrespect* and *Contempt* upon all the rest: And yet those mighty *Men of Morals*, those *Church-Presbyterians*, whom he design'd to complement, are too well known to be trusted, have *Infirmities* of this kind, and as many as their Neighbours. This forward, *dissembled Zeal*, is not unlike that of a passionate *School-master*, about the Year 41, who would whip his Boys for *Swearing*, and at the same time often swear violently, *That he had rather spare 'em for any Vice than That*.

One Thing more I observe upon this Head, That among all the *Vices* of the Age, he durst not so much as touch upon *Schism*, *Pride*, *Malice*, and *Disobedience* (the daily Service offer'd to their God:) Sins that lie too plainly at the *Dissenters* Doors; Sins of as vile a Nature, and of as dangerous Consequence, as any he had named: But he was careful to leave *These* out, for fear of losing his *Design*; and what *That* was, let the Reader judge: 'Tis plain, if he favours or excuses the Practice of any Sin, in vain does he talk of a *Thorow-Reformation*; unless he means by *This*, as one did by the *Thorow-passage* of a *Sermon*, (i. e.) when it goes in at one Ear, and out at t' other.

Pag. 12, 13, 14. He proceeds next to *Union*: By which he seems not to intend, that the *Presbyterians* should (for the Sake of *Christianity* and *Publick Peace*) leave off their *Self-love*, *Will*, and *Humour*, and return to the *Communion* of the Church; but that *We* should forsake our Church, and join with *Them*. We'll, for once, suppose it true, That some *Dissenters* disagree only in the *Circumstantials* of Religion; That the Matters in Dispute, are not so great as *Salvation*, *Heaven*,
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Life Eternal, or the *Way* to these; That our Contests are about Things of very small moment, that may either *be done*, or *omitted*, without *Sin*: Which Side now, in Reason and Duty, ought to comply? Must the *Mother* quit all her just Authority over her *stubborn, prodigal, and rebellious Children*, and give them leave to be *undutiful*? submit to, and approve their *Disorders*? How miserable must be the State of such an *unnatural Family*! And shall our *Mother* the *Church* (this *Apostolical, Uniform, Well-establish'd Church*, careful to preserve her *Children* in *Truth* and *good Order*) must She be rul'd by the *Dissenters*? break all *Order* and *Discipline*, to gratifie them that delight in *Confusion*, and agree in *nothing else*? who, had they Power to govern in *Church-Matters*, would not grant us *Liberty* to use our own *Prayers*; nor those *Innocent Ceremonies* of *Decency* and *Order*, which they once destroy'd? Ought not they rather to recede from their *private Humour* and *Fancies*, and gladly join in our *Communion*? Let any sober, modest, impartial *Considerer* judge fairly between the *Mother* and her *Children*, (a most *compassionate Mother*, willing to forgive and forget *Offences*, and with both Hands to embrace all that are *sensible* of their *Errors*, and return to their *due Obedience*.) Shall those Men that allow our *Church* to be in the Right, as to all *essential* and *necessary Points* of *Religion* and *Happiness*, venture the Ruine of the *whole Family*, rather than comply in some Things, which many of 'em confess, are not worth the disputing?

Or, if by *Union*, he means, a *kind, charitable Agreement*, in *yielding* to each other in a few *Indifferent Things*; I would know, what *one Step* the *Presbyterians* have made towards this *Union*? No Offer on our Part

will suffice, to this purpose, less than the *Abolition* of our *whole Service, Canons, and Discipline*. These Men are by many undeniable *Arguments* (in *Conferences* and *Writings*) convinc'd, That our *Doctrine, Worship, and Ceremonies* are good and lawful; They have declar'd so, by their *Occasional* Communicating in our Churches, and getting their Sons admitted into our Society, as *Deacons* and *Priests*, (which, if *sinful*, I hope they would not do.) I may add, That before the *Toleration* was obtain'd, few were the *Dissenters* in most *Parishes*, that came not frequently to Church, and united in our *Publick Worship*: But now, in stead of *uniting*, they strive to *divide* us, multiply their *Schism-Houses*, and set up as many *Schools of Division*, as they have *Gifted-Men*, fitted to *delude* and *squeeze* the unthinking People.

However, I shall next examine his *Five Arguments* for *Union*.

1. The First whereof is, *Because Infallibility is not lodg'd with any Men*. Which *Argument* would do mighty well in the Hands of the most *abominable Heretick*: Suppose, for the present, a *Socinian*; May not he, by this way of Reasoning, plead thus for himself, to the *Orthodox*? "You say, that *Christ* is truly *God*, and for "this *Doctrine* you pretend the Authority of *Scripture*; "but there is no *Passage* that you quote, which we do "not expound to a different *Sense* from you, and think "our selves in the right: And you know, you are but "Men, and therefore may err, as well as we. Let us "therefore have no more Words about the Matter, but "leave it to the Last Day to clear all *Doubts*. But, what if there be no *Infallibility*? Will he infer from thence, that there is no *Certainty*? I suppose, he is sure, that he understands some *plain Texts* of *Scripture*; and yet, I hope,

hope, he will not pretend to be *Infallible*. There is nothing, that I know of, which can hinder a Man from believing *some Accounts* of what was done in *former Times*, tho' he do not esteem the *most Authentick Historian* to be endued with an *Infallible Spirit*. And I think Matters of *Religion* are capable of as good *Evidence*, as Matters of *Fact*. So that, notwithstanding it *be true*, That no Man is *Infallible*; yet still, in a *Controverted Point*, one Side may be sure, that their *Adversaries* are in the wrong.

But where *Reason* will not serve, *Authority* must help : And therefore we have the *Opinion* of Dr. *Wake* in the Case, whom he hath quoted fairly, but I think to little purpose, unless his *Judgment* were more *weighty* and *valuable*, than really it is. And if I might be permitted to deliver my *Thoughts*, I should say, That our *Author* hath done the *Doctor* much more Honour by quoting him, than the *Doctor* has done him by his *Concurrence*. But against *his*, I shall oppose the *Opinion* of the *London-Divines*, who in their *Learned Tracts* concerning the *Points in Controversie*, have said enough to convince *all People*, except the *Dissenters*, and Dr. *Wake*. Pag. 12.

2. The *Second Argument* for *Union*, is *Mutual Forbearance* : *All the Dissenters now declare for it, as the best Expedient*. To this I answer, We may and ought to have *Charity* for each other, even to our most implacable *Enemies* : But this alone cannot possibly unite such a *Medley of differing and contrary Religions* into one *Church*. For, if we offer never so good and *convincing Reasons*, every Man is left to his own *Choice*, to *admit* or *refuse* them, as he thinks fit : So that if there wants *Power* and *Discipline*, for the *Encouragement* of those who do *unite*, and to discourage those who *refuse* their

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Communion, they cannot long hold together. I heartily commend a *tender and moderate Use* of *Church-Censures*, and of those *Laws* that are *necessary* for the *well-governing* of us all: But no Man can frame such a *Scheme* of *Religion*, in which so many *opposite Parties* can concur, if there is not something more than *Mutual Forbearance*, to keep the *Body* in *Strength* and *Motion*. *Charity* should *soften*, but not *destroy* *Government*.

3. *The Third Argument.* When the *Dissenters* have nothing else to say for their *unreasonable Divisions*, then they call themselves *Weak Brethren*, and would be *treated as such*. But, I marvel under what *Pretence* they can challenge any *Privilege* belonging to Them, under *that Notion*. They take upon them to be *Teachers of others*, *wiser* and *better* than their *Neighbours*, the only *Sober* and *Godly Party*, and are apt to despise all other *Christians*, as *Ignorant* and *Profane*. With what *Colour of Reason* then can it be pleaded for them, to have any *Favour* or *Compliance* shew'd to their *Weakness*? Tho' they love to argue against us from the Example of *St. Paul's Condescension* to the uninstructed *Jews* or *Gentiles*; yet it is apparent, that they do not in *other Cases* willingly liken themselves to those *Weak Believers*, or *Babes in Christ*. They have really better *Thoughts of themselves*, would be *Leaders* and *Masters in Israel*, prescribe to their *Governours*, give *Laws* to *all others*; and do prefer their own *private Opinion* (which they call their *Conscience*) before the *Judgment* of the *wisest Men*, or the *Determination* of their *lausful Superiours*: And if, in all *Instances*, we should deal with them as *weak Persons*, advise them to learn their *Catechism*; they would think themselves highly wrong'd and injur'd. If the *Presbyterians*, and *others*, did in good earnest look upon themselves as *weak*, that
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is, *ignorant, wavering, half-Christians*; did they think the Dislike of the *Constitutions* of our Church, to be the Effect of such *Weakness*; they would either be more careful to *hide* it, or more diligently seek out for *Remedy*: They would be more *modest* and *humble*, and not so forward to *judge* and *condemn* what they don't *understand*: They would not encourage one another to *persist* in this their *Weakness*, nor breed up their *Children* in it, nor so zealously endeavour to instil the same *Prejudices* and *Mistakes* into all with whom they converse. But the Truth is, they ordinarily look upon their *Opposition* to the *Orders* of our Church, as the Effect of an *higher Illumination*, *greater Knowledge* than other Men have attain'd to. — They rather count us *Church-men* the *weak Christians*, if they will allow us *so much*: For, otherwise, if they do not take us for the *weaker* and *worse Christians*, why do they *separate* from us? Why do they *associate* and *combine* in *distinct Congregations*, as being *purser*, more *select Christians*, than others? Now, tho' such Persons as these, may be in truth *very weak*, of *little Judgment* or *Goodness*, notwithstanding this *Conceit* of *themselves* and *their Party*; yet are they not to claim the *Privileges* of *weak Persons*, since they are fond of their *Ignorance* and *Mistakes*, against all the *Means* of *Conviction* offer'd to them. They can juggle in the Case, be either *weak* or *strong*, according as it best suits with the *Argument* they are managing against us.

4. The next *Argument* is, about the *Mischiefs* which the want of such *Union*, as he would have, brings. The *Publick* is *depriv'd* of the *Labours* of many *Learned* and *Godly Men*. But he would have done well to have prov'd, That the *Publick* wanted the *Labours* of those *Persons* which he sets off with such a *Character*: And,
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if it does *not*, I cannot imagine why they should be sought after, since there are so many *true Sons* of the *Church*, who deserve to be provided for in the first place, as being superiour to them in point of *Obedience*, and at least equal in *all other Respects*. — He goes on, and tells us, *That for want of this Union, one Side cries out PERSECUTORS! and Men of cruel and bitter Spirits!* But 'tis strange to hear Men talk of *Persecution*, when there is a *Toleration*; and complain of *Hardships* upon the Account of *Religion*, when they may do *what they list*. The *Great Persecution* therefore must be *Want of Preferment*: For, tho' the *Church* may be never so blame-worthy upon the Account of her *Discipline*, there is no Fault to be found with her *Revenues*; which if they could enjoy, it is not unlikely but they would be able to satisfy themselves pretty well with being within *the Pale of the Church*. But it seems, it is a grievous Crime, *That these Choice Men have not Choice Livings*; and our *Clergie* are doubly faulty, First, in being *Benefic'd Hirelings themselves*; and next, in not endeavouring, that these *Learned and Godly Men*, whose *Labours* are so much wanted, be not made *Hirelings* too.

5. His *last Argument* for *Union*, is, to consider the *Nature* of the *Things* which are and have been in *difference*: *That they are not Things of absolute Necessity to Salvation*. Here our *Author* seems to me to write Booty, and to plead *against* those, whose Cause he meant to *defend* (as before hinted.) For, if the *Matters* in Controversie be not *Sinful*, but of an *Indifferent Nature*; then I would fain know, why our *Dissenters* should refuse their *Obedience*? For, if there must be some *Rules* appointed for the *Manner* of the *Worship* of
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God, and for the Maintenance of *good Discipline*, the *Power* of Making these *Rules* must rather lie in them that have the *Government* over us, than in those, whom none besides themselves, think to be sufficiently qualified for the Exercise of *Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction*.

If it shall be here urg'd, That tho' the Things to which *Conformity* is requir'd, be not in themselves *Sinful*, yet they are so *to them*, and therefore they must not do them, for fear, or rather because they know they shall offend their *Consciences*. In answer to this, I say, That by *this Rule*, the *Superiors* of the Church can have *no manner* of *Authority*, of what kind soever. For, if they command any thing contrary to *Gods Laws*, it is *ipso facto Null*; and if they command any thing which God had *before enjoin'd*, This owes not its Obligation to *Humane Authority*, but *Divine*. It remains therefore, that either the Church hath *no Power at all*, or else She can exercise it only about such Things as do not concern *the Foundations of Faith or Worship*.

I have said enough to answer this short, trifling, indigested *Sermon*; have in some Places spar'd the *Author*; took off my Pen, rather than lean too hard upon him. I never blame a *Clergie-man*, if he should want *Quickness of Wit*, *Vivacity of Fancy*, or the *Genteel Meen* and *Breeding* of his Neighbours: I would not despise him, if he's no *Great Scholar*, (Men have their different *Talents*, and not always the same Advantages to improve them: A *regular, plain, honest, sober, and sedulous* Man is ever acceptable with the *Best and Greatest*;) But if he turns *Knave*, lays aside his *Duty*, forgets his *Solemn Oaths*, his *Ordination*, *Canonical Obedience*, *Subscriptions*, and *Conscience*; preaches *unsound Doctrine*, omits or alters

the *Divine-Service*, and makes a *Conventicle* of his *Church*, (misrepresenting our *Religion* to be as *uncertain*, as *unconcluding*, as are the *wild*, *erroneous*, *disconsonant* *Opinions* and *Doctrines* of the several *Dissenters*) such an *insincere*, *irregular* *Clergie-man* (pick'd out of the *next* *County*, not found in *This*) might, as a *senseless* *Tool*, serve to some *ill* *Purposes*; but can be *true* to no *Religion*, does not *serve*, but *dishonour* the *Church*, and ought to hear of it before the *Day of Judgment*. — I advise the *Author*, (if he has any *Remains* of *Good-humour* and *In-genuity*) to preach or write a *Recantation*; and since he's very *unlucky* in his own *Choice*, I here propose a *fit* *Subject* for him to insist on; *Isa.* 44. 25. — *He frustrates the Tokens of the Liars, and makes Diviners mad; turns wise Men backward, and makes their Knowledge foolish.*

Or, if this *disguis'd* *Presbyterian* should be call'd to preach at the *Funeral* of any *Ring-leader* of that *Party*, the *Text* should be, *By this time he stinketh*, *St. John* 11. and let him leave it to his *Audience* to make the *Ap-plication*.

If he thinks fit to publish his *Composures* on these or any other *Subjects*, I shall as readily comply with my *Friend's* *Command*, in giving my *Sense* of them, as I have done of this *SERMON*: And if any body, that reads these *Animadversions* on it, should hope to excuse the *Author*, by consulting the *Original*, I do assure him, 'twould be but *Loss* of *Time*; and to re-print the *Whole*, will not be worth the *Charges* of the *Press*. If the *Dissenters* think otherwise, let them produce all the *Copies* secretly convey'd into their *Hands*, and it will appear, that *this* *Author* is now treated with far greater *Respect*, *Justice*, and *Integrity*, than he has shew'd

to

to the most *Primitive* and *Apostolical* Church in the World.

• I conclude in the Words of St. Cyprian, upon 1 St. Job. 2. 19. *Vid.*

Nemo æstimet Bonos de Ecclesia posse discedere.

Triticum non rapit Ventus; nec Arborem solida Radice fundatam, procella subvertit. Cypr. lib. de Simpliciter. Prælat.

FINIS.

17
The Church Defended.
to the right Christian and Apostolical Church in the
World.
I conclude in the Words of St. Cyprian, upon 1 St. Job.
Nemo est in hoc seculo deus, sed Christus.
Tunc non erat Christus; nec aliter se habet Christus.
Christus, quia deus, Christus, quia deus, Christus, quia deus.

PAULI
